

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A service provider system adapted for distributing services, including patch selection and delivery, in a distributed computing environment. The system includes a
5 service manager linked to the communications network that functions to obtain and store client system information from the client systems during performance of the services. A service deployment tool registers service providers by storing service proxies from the service
10 providers that are executable code and include an interface defining the methods implemented by the service. The tool functions to transfer service proxies to the client system in response to service requests. A service selection tool processes service requests to
15 match service proxies to select appropriate available services for the client system. The client system includes a virtual service mechanism for registering as a recipient with the service manager, transmitting the service requests, and executing the service proxies
20 received in response to the service requests.